

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A method for producing a cobalt-protein complex comprising:

the step a) of preparing a solution including Co^{2+} ions, a protein, and HEPES, and having a pH of not less than 8.0 and not more than 8.8; and

a step b) of adding an oxidizing agent to the solution and thereby making the protein contain particles composed of cobalt,

wherein the protein is apoferritin,

the concentration of the Co^{2+} ions is not less than 2.5 mM and not more than 5.0 mM,

the pH of the solution is adjusted to be not less than 8.0 and not more than 8.8 when the concentration of the Co^{2+} ions is not less than 2.5 mM and not more than 3.5 mM,

the pH of the solution is adjusted to be not less than 8.0 and not more than 8.4 when the concentration of the Co^{2+} ions is more than 3.5 mM and not more than 4.0 mM, and

the pH of the solution is adjusted to be not less than 8.0 and not more than 8.2 when the concentration of the Co^{2+} ions is more than 4.0 mM and not more than 5.0 mM.

2-20. (Cancelled)

21. (Previously presented) The method for producing a cobalt-protein complex of claim 1, wherein the oxidizing agent is H_2O_2 .

22. (Previously presented) The method for producing a cobalt-protein complex of claim 1, wherein the step b) is performed at a temperature of 70°C or less.

23. (Previously presented) The method for producing a cobalt-protein complex of claim 1, wherein the step b) is performed at a temperature of not less than 40°C and not more than 70°C.

24. (Previously presented) The method for producing a cobalt-protein complex of claim 23, wherein the step b) is performed at a temperature of not less than 50°C and not more than 60°C.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Previously presented) The method for producing a cobalt-protein complex of claim 1, wherein the particles composed of cobalt includes $\text{CoO}(\text{OH})$.